

Negotiation Center of Excellence (NCE)

The Air Force Negotiation Center of Excellence (NCE), with its residence programs housed within Air University (located at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Alabama), will spearhead the development and application of negotiation, collaboration, and problem-solving skills as core competencies throughout the Air Force in a variety of demanding contexts, including warfighting operations.

The concept of the NCE is consistent with the current Air Force professional development initiative providing negotiation and communication skills training to 30,000 Air Force supervisors to facilitate the implementation of the National Security Personnel system (NSPS). Both the supervisor training and the NCE are part of the ongoing work of developing “enduring competencies” across the Air Force.

The NCE will:

- Apply negotiation and conflict management skills to the solving of real-world problems.
- Research new thinking in negotiation theory, specifically in the areas of cross-cultural communication and multi-party negotiation.
- Develop training modules for export to other governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Development and Organization

The Negotiation Center of Excellence came into existence on 11 August, 2005 through the signing of an MOA between SAF/GCD and the Air Force Air University. The NCE curriculum is currently being produced in collaboration with leading academics, a diverse network of partner institutes, and subject matter experts. The curriculum combines traditional interest-based negotiation concepts with cross-cultural and multi-party components, designed to prepare students to use these skills every day on the job, whether it be on the battlefield or behind a desk.

Several initiatives fall under the NCE, including the following:

- The development of core residence and distance learning courses.
- The development of a Negotiation eTool.
- MOAs with institutions such as National Defense University (with a specific emphasis on interagency negotiation training).
- In association with Ohio State University Law School, the publication of a book researching cutting edge development in cross-cultural and multi-party negotiation.

- The Negotiation and Appropriate Dispute Resolution Course (taking place 22-26 May, 2006).

In addition, the first NCE course offering is set to take place 5-7 April, 2006 at the Air War College as an executive seminar to current AWC students, and will focus on three key components: cross-cultural communication, interest-based negotiation, and multi-party negotiation. Additional executive seminars are planned for June and September of 2006.

Further Information on the Initiatives:

Core Curriculum and Distance Learning

We are working with AWC to incorporate this education into its core curriculum. We are also working with organizations such as USIP to review materials and subjects that would be most compatible for distance learning at the NCE.

Negotiation eTool

The NCE is evaluating commercially available web tools as well as developing its own open source tool to provide an infrastructure that will transform individual negotiations into a business process and an additional Air Force corporate capability. These eTools facilitate thinking about negotiations in a systematic way, and may also contain dynamic libraries of information on prior negotiations that will allow Air Force personnel to share negotiation insights and experiences.

National Defense University/Interagency Collaboration

The NCE is collaborating with the National Defense University (NDU) and its Interagency Transformation, Education and After Action Review (ITEA) program. An MOA has been executed memorializing this collaboration, involving curriculum exchanges and the sharing of resources.

ITEA is a federally funded program that seeks to improve coordination among the executive departments and agencies responsible for crisis planning and response. The ITEA program was established in 1997 in response to the increasing number of complex crises requiring a coordinated response among US Government agencies and departments.

Ohio State University Law School Collaboration

This research volume is scheduled to be published in the Summer of 2006 and will be made available to any organizations interested in the subject. It will also be a resource for NCE “teach-the-teacher” trainings.

NADRC (The Negotiation and Appropriate Dispute Resolution Course)

NADRC introduces JAG attorneys to interest based negotiation skills and advocacy in Air Force ADR proceedings across all subject matter areas. The course will consist of interactive lectures, demonstrations, guest speakers, and substantial negotiation and mediation exercises across a broad spectrum of disputes. Complementing these workshop activities are traditional informational lectures to acquaint students with the fundamental concepts of interest-based negotiation (IBN), ADR in general, and the Air Force ADR Program.